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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Interview: Mike Weikert, Federal Air Marshal Service of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service

Event: Interview

Date: May 7, 2004

Prepared by: Lisa Sullivan

Special Access Issues: None

Team: 8

Participants (non-Commission): Mike Weikert and Christine Beyer

Participants (Commission): Miles Kara, John Azzarello, and Lisa Sullivan

Location: 9-11 Commission office at the GSA conference room

None of the lines were recorded in the WOC on 9-11.

Background

[U] Weikert started with the Office of Civil Aviation security in 1986. He started at the Headquarters at a Junior Intelligence Analyst. January 1988 went to the FAMS (Federal Air Marshal Service). In 1995, he became as staff member on crisis management and standards and evaluation division under ACO. He reported to Carolyn Riley on 9-11 and then Lee Longmire, ACO-1. She was on vacation that day.

[U] He'd worked a hijacking in training before. He'd never experienced an actual hijacking.

[U] Crisis Management duties were collateral jobs for those that worked in ACS. As needed, they would report to the Aviation Crisis Center on the 10th floor of Headquarters.

[U] How was the Crisis Center supposed to operate in the event of national emergency?

[U] We had 11 positions in the ACC, and 2 positions were in the SCIF (ACI folks would man it) and a couple more people were in the SVTs. Two positions would oversee the other 9 in the ACC.

[U] There were two teleconference nets; a primary and a tactical. The tactical was designed for FAA internal-use other FAA offices and field units. The primary net would engage CIA, FBI, other agencies. The unit in the middle of the room would be manned

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by air carrier corporate security. The primary net would have air carriers on it if the event involved a carrier. The people on the dias had access to people on each net and those engaging the airlines. An event recorder for the primary and an event recorder for the tactical nets were located in the room. An aviation explosives person may be called in; a position for intelligence subject matter expert; air traffic; public affairs; aviation operations position to converse with the managers in the field; if a situation involved hazardous materials, an expert would be brought in.

[U] He was handling the primary net for most of the day.

[U] Janet Riffe, Air Carrier PSI; Pete Falcone was on the tactical net; Tom Taffe was the primary net recorder behind him; and Chuck Guffey was the tactical net recorder.

[U] Senior Air Traffic folks were definitely in there. Weikert thought one person might have been Steve Brown.

[U] Lee Longmire was sidetracked - he was the lead security guy there that day. He was engaging the Administrator and Deputy Administrator.

[U] Weikert did not have much interaction with senior level air traffic in his role.

[U] It seemed like air traffic took over the dias that day at some point.

[U] The questions generated on the primary net were rumors of additional hijackings. He tried to confirm that with the air traffic people.

[U] He wasn't aware of the Dave Canoles line from the Air Traffic Suite.

On 9-11

[U] At 8:45 AM, he and his colleague Bob Clarke were paged simultaneously by the ACI watch. He got an initial brief in the Watch on the 3rd floor (6 or 7 people were employed - all had collateral duties on the intelligence side). The page alerted him to call the watch.

[U] The initial information - Claudio Manno was in there - the flight attendant may have been stabbed - not sure if it was American Airlines or not. He and Claudio agreed they needed to stand up the Command Center. Weikert and Clarke went upstairs to stand it up.

[U] Bob McLaughlin had also got the call. The three of them were all in the SCIF. So McLaughlin went to tell Longmire while Weikert and Clarke went to stand up the Command Center. Sharon Battle was on duty at the WOC. He told her, "Let's open up the nets and fire up the command center."

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[U] The mini-SCIF in the Command Center was opened up that day and manned by personnel from ACI. Matthew Hahn might have been in there. He can't remember the second guy's name. It might have been Bart Merkley.

[U] The NOIWAN call would have most likely taken place downstairs in the ACI Watch. He does not know.

[U] Event recorders were computerized. It was a software product designed in-house. The system was fairly new. It was capable of tracking multiple events. They were kept that day. The log was kept running for some time.

More and more people started coming in. Pete Falcone was a manager at the time. He took up the tactical net. Pete Falcone was the moderator of that line.

In the ACC, they turned on CNN and saw the first building in smoke. Quickly saw the second plane hit the building. He never knew there was a second hijacking in progress. My initial thought was that these are not connected events (between receiving report of a hijacking and opening the command center, and the image of the burning Trade Center tower) these events related.

What effect did seeing the second plane hit the building?

He believes that once it became known the second plane that hit the second building that it was a coordinated attack. He heard about the second hijacking after the second event.

CNN was right up on it; he doesn't remember if the sound was up; but the pictures spoke for themselves.

The first one could have been some sort of explosion...

He didn't have time to analyze whether separate events were related.

It took some time to sort of the information through intell, PSI, air traffic – all the entities putting the pieces together.

Were any of the folks talking about getting military help?

No, not when I first got up there. Not that he's aware of.

The Command Center was one component that day. There were other high level conversations going on elsewhere.

It took a long time. He assumed there were notifications going on. He was waiting for folks to come on. Roughly 9:20 the line was activated. That was when the teleconference bridge was actually activated. Generally new people would be announced on the line. Normally he would announce who he was, identify the primary net, give updates.

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Was there a guide he followed to make sure all parties were on the line.

The WOC has a checklist. He relied on the WOC personnel to use a checklist to alert relevant parties to the primary net.

FBI, State Department, White House situation room, DOD was on briefly, CIA...

We sent an ACO person over to the FBI SIOC on the role of communicator. That person was Karen Geyser.

The name we have is Jeff Bauer at SIOC.

He doesn't know who Tracy Paquin is.

Bob Clarke set up the event log in that time frame. Eventually Tom Taffe took over. An overflow room was set up on 3rd floor. Monitoring of the nets was going on down there as well.

People would take notes and pass it to the event coordinator and he would type it in.

The sheet they are looking at was provided by T Paquin. Wiekert thought it was a part of the event log. It does not have an author's name;

We do not think there were any guns involved.

Do you remember hearing reports that AAL 11 was still airborne after impact at the trade center. He does not remember hearing that. Although there was confusion about what flight hit what building for some time.

AEA-700 was Marcus Arroyo at 1330 on line 5114.

He thinks secret service was on his primary net – Chuck Green –
He does not know from the WOC log if notification meant they were asked to join the net.

State; FBI; USSS; DOD for a short period of time; White House Situation Room; NMCC was brought in as a "listening mode". NMCC is the conduit to the Special Operations groups. He doesn't recall a male or a female voice, or DOD identifying themselves.

We were trying to raise them when we were tracking the plane that crashed in the Pentagon. Belger was in the room at the time. He was monitoring both nets. AATC was monitoring 93. It was heading toward Washington. That day, he doesn't recall the nets being on speaker phone. What he learned about UAL 93 he overheard in the room. He wasn't getting specific information from his net. There was little traffic on his net. The

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agencies on his net wanted updates to the situation. He doesn't recall a lot of traffic on his net.

He knew there was a fourth aircraft that ATC representatives were concerned about. This was after the third plane crashed into the Pentagon. They were monitoring the event through the net. It took some time to figure out it was AAL 77 that hit the Pentagon.

The TSD was not available in the Aviation Crisis Center that day. The capability existed but they did not display it.

There was some effort to get the military on one of the nets. It was an open question: "Does anyone have contact with the military right now?" It was Monte Belger that was framing the question at the time.

He was under the impression that the military had already scrambled planes over Washington "capped" before he heard about the fourth plane heading toward DC.

"A connection must have been made between the FAA and the DOD before the fourth plane crashed."

He was aware that there were other suspected hijackings out there. The Delta 1989 brought up by Azzarello sounded familiar to him. This was a result of profiling.

The only thing he can think of is that they were up on the net earlier and they dropped off. That might have something to do with the attack on the Pentagon. They should have had redundant systems in place.

The primary net as defined has the NMCC as an entity that is supposed to be monitoring the net as a protocol. Was it set up such so that it could handle a multiple event? He assumes so.

There were STU-3 phones on the dias that day.

The DOD Air Threat Conference call was trying to get FAA on the line. It required secure lines to sync up. They would have reached out to the ACI Watch, most likely.

There was at some point a transition from Lee Longmire to Jeff Griffith because of the nature of the incident. Their time was in demand. It doesn't appear the ATC people were aware of the crisis management; the operation of the nets – that was security's domain – coordinating a response.

Those two elements were not melded together in the room. Was it effectively done that day?

They weren't operating on separate parallel tracks. It was a small room. It probably could have been melded together that day.

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Again, it was a collateral duty that day. People were called in to respond to something the likes they have never seen. Having a full time staff, having a constant center running, is important.

He can't recall what was finally done to locate the military when it was learned no one in the ACC had on the line.